

Snow. The Snow, melted by the heat of the Summer, other Snow being fallen within a little while after, is hardened into Ice, which by little and little in a long tract of time depurating it self turns into a Stone, not yielding in hardness and cleanness to Chryftall. Such Stones closely Joyned and compacted together compose a whole Mountain, and that a very firm one; though in Summer-time the Country-people have observed it to burst asunder with great cracking, Thunder-like: which is also well known to Hunters to their great cost, forasmuch as such cracks and openings, being by the Winds covered with Snow, are the death of those, that pass over them.

At the foot of these mountains are with great labour digg'd out Chrystals, which are found among other fossils, of two sorts and colors; some of them are darkish and troubled, which by some are call'd the Chrystal-ore, to be plentifully found in the ascent of Mount *Gottthard*; others transparent, very pure and as clear as Venice-glass; sexangular, great and small: as in the mountains about *Valesia*, and the Town call'd *Urselen* at the foot of the Hill *Schelenin* they are digg'd out, and sold at a good rate. Of this latter kind my Parents, four years agoe, transmitted a very bigg and fair one to *Milan* for 80. pound sterling.

This is, what I have observed about these Hills; What I shall farther learn of the people, inhabiting thereabout, to whom I have written a month since, I shall impart to you.

In September 1668.

Some Observations

Concerning Japan, made by an Ingenious person, that hath many years resided in that Country; as they were communicated in French by M. I; whence they are thus English'd by the Publisher; who some months agoe occasion'd this Account by some Queries, sent to that Traveller.

1. **T**He *Japanese* doubt not at all of their Contry's being an *Island*; though it be separated from the Continent by such narrow Channels that no vessel of any considerable burthen can pass them.

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2. The Air is there very salubrious, but of another temper on this, than on that side of the Mountains, which divide *Japan*. The Plague hath never been heard of there; but the small Pox and Fluxes are very frequent.

3. Their Mountains are fertil almost to the very top.

4. There are found almost all *European* sorts of Fruit, Peaches, Apricoks, Cherries, Prunes, Apples, Pears, and particularly Pipins, Bon Chretien-Pears. Besides these, there is an infinity of other Fruit; but almost none, but what is also found in some part or other of *India*.

5. Silver is there in its highest perfection, but not used in Trade; in which is seen nothing but Gold, and some small coyn of Brass; which latter they spoil by refining it too much. Steell also is there very good.

6. The temper of their Metals was formerly better than 'tis now; but yet they make Courtelas's or short Swords exceeding good.

7. The great Mountain of *Japan* is higher than the *Pico* in *Teneriff*, since being above 18. leagues distant from the Sea-side, it may be seen above 40. leagues off at Sea. There are 8. *Vulcans* or Fire-spitting mountains in *Japan*; and you cannot goe into the Campagne, but you discover one or other of them.

8. There are many Medicinal waters, and Hott-Springs there, which the Inhabitants use in their distempers. They have particular Medicines; but they let no Blood. They make much use of Causticks, by applying upon some nerve or other the powder of *Artemisia* or *Mugwort*, and Cotton, which they set on fire. They always drink their liquors warme.

9. There is so great a store of Venaifon in *Japan*, that they care little for Cattle, though there be no want of them. They employ most Oxen for Ploughing; and they make no Butter nor Cheese, nor are they lovers of Milk. They have great plenty of Corn and Rice.

10. The *Japonefe* are proper enough of stature, and not uncomely in features; they have somewhat prominent bellys. They are exceeding active, and want no Judgement; they are also military and valiant.

11. No Arts are to be met with amongsts them, that are
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not known in *Europe*, except that of making *Lacca*, of which there is some so fine and curious, that whereas in this Country one may buy an ordinary small boxe for 3. or 4. Crowns, one of the same size, when made in Japan of exquisite *Lacca*, will sell for more than 80. crowns. The Author of this Account hath 4. Cabinets of this workmanship, which he affirms to have cost him above 40000 crowns, which he will not sell under 80000. crowns.

12. The Colours, with which they dye their stuffs, never fade. I have seen one of them, which our *Vermillon* and *Couleur de feu* come not near to. It is extracted out of a Flower, like to Saffron, and one pound of it costs an incredible price. To try, whether the Colour will not change by *Lixivium* or Lye, they apply an hot Iron to it; and if there it holds, they assure themselves of the durableness of the Colour.

13. They have Mathematicians amongst them, and believe Iudiciary Astrology, insomuch that the Grandees undertake nothing without pre-consulting those, that make profession of the same.

14. *Japan* yeilds divers sorts of good merchantable Commodities; but chiefly all sorts of silken Stuffs, unwrought Silk, Amber, Precious Stones, Musk, Copper, Steel, Lack-work.

15. The Country is very well peopled and exceeding rich, being exceedingly stored with Gold-mines; and I have seen some of the Gold-ore, which of 10. ounces yeilded 8. of the highest fineness, and pieces of the weight of 120. marks.

16. Their Buildings are very good and commodious. The Appartments are all below on the ground, separated from one another by partitions of Carton painted and gault, which may be foulded and removed like Skreens. Their floors are covered with mattes, and sometimes with silken stuff, embroi-ered velvet, and cloth of gold. All their buildings are but one story high.

17. They have no other conveniences to defend themselves from Heat and Cold, but such as are usual in Italy and Spaine.

18. They use the divertisements of Comedies, which are more brave then those of *Europe*. The Spectators are about 200. paces distant from the Theater, which being cover'd with a

vault, makes the voice of the Actors to be understood to the very end of the Theater. They love Hunting, and Gaming, as Dice, Cards, Chefs &c. At all times of the day, and in all their visits they take Thea and Tobacco.

19. Their Language is altogether different from the *Chinese*; but their Priests, and Courtifans, that is, the Learn'd among them, which bear the Offices of the Court, understand the tongue of *Chochin-china*, and by this means that of *Tunquin, China, Corea &c.* They write neither from the right to the left, nor from the left to the right, but downeward.

20. Their Government is Despotique; the Religion Pagan; the Christian hated upon no other accompt, but that some of those that there professed it, would perswade the *Japonesse* to acknowledg a Superiority above the dignity Royall, disposing of Crowns and Scepters. Their Morals are very good, their faults being punish'd as their Crimes, even Lying and Detraction. Their left hand is the more honourable, and they take horse on that side.

An Account from Paris

Concerning a great Metallin Burning Concave, and some of the most considerable Effects of it: Communicated by severall persons upon the place, where Tryals have been made of it.

IT is true, that Monsieur de *Vilette* of *Lyons*, who formerly made that Burning Concave, * which was of about 30. inches diameter (disposed of to the King of *Denmark*) hath made another, which is larger, now under tryal here. It is of 34. inches diameter, and melts all sorts of Mettals, and Iron it self of the thickness of a Silver-Crown, in less then a minute of time, and vitrifies Brick in the same time; and as for Wood, whether green or dry, it sets it on fire in a moment. The King hath seen it and the performances of it with great satisfaction; and his Majesty is likely to make it his, and then to bestow it on his Royal Academy of Philosophers, for making of farther Experiments with it. *So far they.*

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